

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SEOUL 00383 150404Z
ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PFOR KS US
SUBJ: MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT PARK AND ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHUNG

BEGIN SUMMARY: SPEAKER CHUNG, REPORTING ON JANUARY 14 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PARK, HAS BEEN ASKED TO MEET WITH JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA TO DISCUSS TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. HE REPORTS PARK ACCEPTING GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL AS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE BUT SEEKING DELAY FOR 4-5 YEARS. CHUNG REPORTS PARK RELAXED, CONFIDENT MOOD. END SUMMARY.

1. THIS MORNING (JANUARY 15), NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHUNG IL-KWON BRIEFED ME PRIVATELY ON HIS LENGTHY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PARK JANUARY 14, THE FIRST SUCH PRIVATE SESSION BETWEEN THE TWO IN MANY MONTHS. PARK CALLED IN CHUNG SPECIFICALLY TO REQUEST HIM TO MEET WITH GOJ PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA, AS PARKS' PERSONAL EMMISARY, ON WAY BACK FROM CHUNG'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO AFRICA. CHUNG DEPARTS SEOUL JANUARY 17 AND WILL STOP IN TOKYO FOR FEBRUARY 10 MEETING WITH FUKUDA.

2. PARK REQUESTED THAT CHUNG GET REPORT FROM FUKUDA ON FORTHCOMING VISIT OF VICE PREISDENT-DESIGNATE MONDALE.

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HE ALSO INSTRUCTED HIM TO RAISE TWO ISSUES WITH FUKUDA: FIRST, TROOP WITHDRAWAL, SEEKING FUKUDA'S SUPPORT FOR MAINTENANCE OR AT LEAST GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND TROOPS, (SEE BELOW) AND, SECOND, ECONOMIC ISSUES, URGING GOJ TO ACCEPT INCREASED KOREAN EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY TEXTILES, TO COMPENSATE FOR ACTUAL AND THREATENED PROTECTIONIST MEASURES BY OTHER COUNTRIES.

3. CHUNG MENTIONED THAT EARLIER THIS WEEK HE HAD RECEIVED LENGTHY LETTER FROM FUKUDA, WHO IS VERY OLD FRIEND. FUKUDA WAS MOST FRIENDLY AND SUPPORTIVE OF KOREA IN HIS LETTER.

4. IN CONNECTION WITH FUKUDA MEETING, CHUNG SAID THAT PRESIDENT PARK, WHILE NATURALLY PREFERRING THERE NOT BE ANY GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL, ACCEPTED SUCH WITHDRAWAL AS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE AND WOULD NOT, REPEAT NOT, TAKE ADAMANT STAND IN OPPOSITION TO GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL PER SE. PARK, HOWEVER, INTENDS TO SEEK FROM U.S. GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OVER PERIOD OF 4 TO 5 YEARS. HE BELIEVES THIS PERIOD NECESSARY TO PERMIT BUILD-UP OF KOREAN FORCES AND SAFEGUARD AGAINST ADVERSE EFFECTS OF GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL. CHUNG HELD THAT PARK WAS NOT TOO CONCERNED ABOUT WITHDRAWAL UNDER THESE CONDITIONS. ON OTHER HAND, PARK FEELS STRONGLY THAT GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL WILL NECESSITATE CHANGES IN COMMAND AND ARMISTICE ARRANGEMENTS. SPECIFICALLY, UNC WOULD HAVE TO BE REPLACED WITH KOREAN TAKING OVER JOINT COMMAND AND PANMUNJOM RESPONSIBILITY UNDER ARMISTICE TRANSFERRED TO KOREANS.

5. ACCORDING CHUNG, HE DISCUSSED OTHER POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH PARK, BUT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WAS NOT TOUCHED UPON. PARK EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH RECENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION, CONGRATULATING CHUNG FOR HIS MANAGEMENT. HE ASKED IF THERE WAS ANYTHING THAT HE COULD

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DO FOR THE OPPOSITION. CHUNG MENTIONED THAT THE OPPOSITION WAS MUCH CONCERNED REGARDING THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL ISSUE AND SPECIFICALLY PARK'S JANUARY 12 PROPOSAL RELATING TROOP WITHDRAWAL TO A NONAGGRESSION PACT WITH NORTH KOREA. CHUNG SUGGESTED A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO OPPOSITION'S REQUEST FOR CONSULTATIONS ON THIS QUESTION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEES OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

6. PARK CHIDED SPEAKER CHUNG ON HIS ASSOCIATION WITH GENERAL KANG, SAYING THAT HE HAD SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED THAT KANG NOT BE TORTURED AND WAS SURPRISD BY KANG'S CHARGES TO THIS EFFECT. CHUNG SAID THAT HE HAD CHIDED PARK BACK, POINTING OUT THAT, AFTER ALL, KANG IS HIS CLASSMATE AND HE, CHUNG, SHOULD NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR HIM.

7. PARK ALSO EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH FORMER KCIS DIRECTOR SHIN'S PERFORMANCE AND PARTICULARLY HIS FAILURE TO CONTROL KCIA WASHINGTON OPERATIONS PROPERLY.

PARK TOLD CHUNG THAT HE HAD BEEN UNAWARE OF YANG'S DEALINGS IN WASHINGTON AND WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED TO FIND OUT ABOUT THEM AND VERY MUCH TEMPTED TO ARREST HIM, BUT HAD FINALLY DECIDED NOT TO DO SO.

8. CHUNG SAID THAT HE FOUND PARK IN VERY RELAXED AND CONFIDENT MOOD. HE WAS NOT GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT DEALING WITH NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION, HAVING DECIDED UPON HIS TACTICS ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND PUTTING TO REST, AS FAR AS PARK WAS CONCERNED, WASHINGTON SCANDAL PROBLEM.
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